



Local Agency Formation Commission of Napa County
Subdivision of the State of California

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We Manage Local Government Boundaries, Evaluate Municipal Services, and Protect Agriculture

Agenda Item 7e (Action)

TO: Local Agency Formation Commission

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MEETING DATE: August 3, 2020

SUBJECT: Outreach Committee Update

RECOMMENDATION

The recommended action is for the Commission to provide direction to staff and/or the Outreach Committee to commence any desired outreach efforts.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

On February 3, 2020, the Commission appointed Chair Leary and Alternate Commissioner Kahn to a newly established ad hoc Outreach Committee (“the Committee”) for purposes of exploring opportunities and necessary resources to provide outreach and education to the general public related to LAFCO activities.

The Committee met on March 11, 2020, to develop an Outreach Plan. The Committee evaluated several outreach strategies along with the resources needed to implement those strategies. The Committee discussed available resources and the intended audiences for various outreach efforts. The Committee agreed to prioritize outreach strategies that eliminate or minimize financial impacts, staff time, and printed materials.

The Committee met again on July 20, 2020, and considered the significant impacts of COVID-19 with respect to previously discussed outreach strategies. For example, physical public workshops are no longer an effective outreach tool within the foreseeable future, but virtual meetings provide an efficient and versatile option for government agencies to engage the public without the logistical challenges of a well-attended physical meeting. The Committee concluded the plan and its implementation should be flexible to accommodate changed conditions. The Committee agreed upon a Draft Outreach Plan as described on the following page.

Kenneth Leary, Chair
Councilmember, City of American Canyon

Margie Mohler, Commissioner
Councilmember, Town of Yountville

Scott Sedgley, Alternate Commissioner
Councilmember, City of Napa

Diane Dillon, Vice Chair
County of Napa Supervisor, 3rd District

Brad Wagenknecht, Commissioner
County of Napa Supervisor, 1st District

Ryan Gregory, Alternate Commissioner
County of Napa Supervisor, 2nd District

Gregory Rodeno, Commissioner
Representative of the General Public

Eve Kahn, Alternate Commissioner
Representative of the General Public

Brendon Freeman
Executive Officer

Draft Outreach Plan

Title: “Napa LAFCO at a Glance”

Program Status: Pilot Program

Goals:

1. Build trust in the community
2. Provide transparency – it is our duty to tell people what we do
3. Make Napa LAFCO more visible and less obscure
4. Provide reliable, consistent information and facts

Target Audience:

1. Elected officials (especially newly elected)
2. Local agencies
3. Real estate and land use professionals
4. Agricultural industry
5. Hospitality industry
6. Miscellaneous interest groups and organizations
7. News media
8. General public

Principles:

1. Factual and neutral information
2. Environmentally sensitive outreach program
3. Cost effective
4. Leverage efforts

Implementation Strategy

The following are examples of outreach strategies discussed by the Committee. The Commission is invited to discuss these strategies and potential alternative strategies. With respect to available financial resources, it is important to note the Commission’s adopted budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 does not include any dedicated funds for outreach efforts.

- Islands Education and Outreach: New Page on Website (Budget Impact: \$49.50)
The Committee recommends performing dedicated education and outreach efforts related to annexation of unincorporated islands. Toward this end, staff recently authorized the Commission’s website host, Planeteria, to add a new page dedicated to island annexation information on the agency’s website. Staff expeditiously proceeded with this activity given the timely nature of island annexation discussions with City of Napa staff. The next step is for staff to add content to the new page. The Committee recommends additional outreach efforts including, but not limited to, conducting virtual public workshops, updating the Commission’s informational flyer on island annexation, and potentially mailing a copy of the flyer to all landowners and residents within the islands. Staff will be contacting agencies that have conducted island workshops and developed informational documents.

- Social Media Engagement (Budget Impact: \$0)
Staff and interested members of the Commission would collectively allocate up to three hours per week creating social media content and engaging with the public. Examples of content include short videos of staff or members of the Commissioner explaining why LAFCOs are important and can provide a forum for discussion of local governmental issues. A student intern could be a valuable resource in the development a social media program.
- Informational Handouts (Budget Impact: \$0)
Staff has been attending regular teleconference meetings hosted by CALAFCO and the Commission's Executive Officer expressed concern that LAFCO's relevance would be scrutinized in response to COVID-19's impact on the economy. Several other LAFCOs shared the same concern and agreed to form a committee to focus on the right messaging for LAFCOs throughout the state to demonstrate the importance and potential of LAFCOs. The Commission's Executive Officer and Analyst II both served on the CALAFCO committee, which held several meetings and produced high quality informational handouts that are currently in draft form. Once finalized, the Outreach Committee recommends electronically disseminating CALAFCO's handouts as part of the Commission's outreach efforts.
- Utilize LAFCO's Neutral Role (Budget Impact: \$0)
LAFCO is uniquely positioned to collaborate with other local government agencies and look outside the typical silos. In this role LAFCO can facilitate cooperation, sharing of resources, and dissemination of information. The Countywide Water and Wastewater Municipal Service Review (MSR) has identified various agencies, some with robust resources and others struggling to survive. Implementation of the MSR can include identifying "warning signs" that an agency is in crisis. Although LAFCO does not have the authority to resolve all issues, it does have the mandate to shine a light on these issues. LAFCO can serve as a "clearinghouse" of information, studies, and solutions from across the state and across agency silos. The Commission may consider building on this recent success by scheduling more countywide MSRs for specific services as opposed to MSRs for individual agencies. This can be accomplished in the annual Work Program or through a future strategic planning workshop. The Commission is also invited to discuss preferences and strategies to disseminate information about MSRs and other relevant LAFCO activities to the target audience groups.

- Leveraging Efforts of Others (Budget Impact: \$0)

The Committee determined leveraging efforts of other agencies and organizations would be both cost effective and provide an opportunity to reach a wider audience. Methods to accomplish this include:

 1. Dedicated efforts to proactively schedule Executive Officer presentations (virtual) to various organizations such as service clubs and local groups
 2. Interviews and/or press releases to local media (e.g., Napa Valley Register, Napa Valley Marketplace Magazine)
 3. Request other agencies to include a link to the LAFCO website on their websites

- Additional Outreach Methods (Budget: \$0):

The Committee recognized that outreach regarding LAFCO has several challenges. The first challenge is making people aware that LAFCO exists. The next challenge is explaining what LAFCO does and why. Generally, an individual would not know to visit the LAFCO website. With this in mind, proactive methods of outreach were discussed by the Committee. The following provides a list of possible actions:

 1. Biannual Napa LAFCO open house for newly elected officials (when physical gatherings are allowed)
 2. Electronic distribution of the LAFCO Directory of Local Agencies
 3. Develop and electronically distribute a Napa LAFCO newsletter (annually or quarterly)

ATTACHMENTS

None